E.C. - Mr. Kelly
Liberty
516

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

Washington, D.C. 20520

DECLASSIFIED
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DECLASSIFY [illegible] ASAP
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Mr. E. H. Taylor
1320 Somerset Drive
Glenview, Illinois

Dear Mr. Taylor:

I have your recent letter addressed to the Department of State in which you inquired about an attack on a United States ship during the June 1967 Arab-Israel war. I assume you are referring to the U.S.S. Liberty which was damaged (not sunk) by Israeli forces June 8, 1967.

Promptly following the attack the Government of Israel informed the United States Government that it assumed responsibility for the attack and was prepared to make amends for the tragic loss of life and material damage.

On December 29, 1967 our Embassy in Tel Aviv presented to the Government of Israel claims totalling $3,323,500 on behalf of the families of the 34 men killed in the attack. After negotiations, Israel paid in full the amount claimed on May 27, 1968. On March 28, 1969 our Embassy in Tel Aviv presented claims totalling $3,452,275 on behalf of the injured men, and Israel paid in full the amount claimed on April 28, 1969. In both cases, United States Treasury checks drawn on the funds received from the Government of Israel were sent to the claimants within a month after the Israeli payment was received.

Negotiations on the claim for damage to the ship are still in process. The ship has in the meantime been decommissioned and is in the process of being scrapped, along with other vessels in its class.

The Department of State issued a press release (No. 116, May 13, 1969) containing much of the above information.

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This release stimulated a few press reports which to my knowledge were limited to small items on the inside pages of such newspapers as the New York Times and the Washington Post.

Sincerely,

H. H. Stackhouse
Country Director
Israel and Arab-Israel Affairs

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